

SENATE—Thursday, March 10, 2005

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's prayer will be offered by guest Chaplain John K. Jenkins, Sr., Pastor at First Baptist Church of Glenarden, Landover, MD.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Shall we pray.

Heavenly Father, I come before Your presence to thank You and praise You for this day. I thank You for Your goodness and Your mercy. I thank You for Your grace and love that You have extended to us every day.

Father, I come to You today to thank You for the honor and privilege of living in this great and marvelous country. I thank You for our freedom and for the ability to worship You and serve You freely. We do not consider it lightly that You have given us this opportunity, and we thank You.

I cry out to You this day, Heavenly Father, for our Nation—for the people of this country. I cry out for the mothers and fathers. I pray for their children. I cry out for our school systems, police departments, government agencies and businesses. Please allow this Nation to be one that will honor You and Your ways.

Lord, I beseech Your throne this day on behalf of these prominent leaders of our Nation. Give them Your truth and Your direction. Give them Your wisdom and Your power. I pray for each of these Senators and their families—their spouses and their children. I pray for the people whom these men and women represent. I ask that You meet their needs and prove Yourself strong to each of them.

Finally, Father, I close this prayer by giving You thanks and praise for what You have already done, for what You are doing, and for what You are going to do. I thank You now and I pray this prayer in the Mighty Name of my resurrected Saviour. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

**APPOINTMENT OF ACTING
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE**

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, March 10, 2005.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN E. SUNUNU, a Senator from the State of New Hampshire, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. SUNUNU thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

**RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY
LEADER**

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning, we will have morning business until 11 a.m. At 11 o'clock, we will resume the bankruptcy legislation and immediately proceed to three consecutive rollcall votes. Those votes are on the Kennedy amendments Nos. 70 and 69, and the Akaka amendment No. 105. Under the order from last night, we will then have another series or two of stacked votes throughout the day in order to finish the bill.

We will vote on final passage of the bankruptcy bill later today. It is going to be a very busy day, with many rollcall votes over the course of today. Therefore, I encourage all Members to remain close to the floor. We will limit all votes, after the first in the series, to 10 minutes in length. I encourage my colleagues to stay nearby so that we do not have to extend this limit. It is always difficult, and we always have excuses as people come in a few minutes late, but on a day like today we need—we will; not need—we will finish this bill. We will have a lot of votes over the course of today. We have to have all of our colleagues understand that they need to come and vote, and vote on time.

Over the course of the day, we will consider the bankruptcy bill. It is a bill we have worked on for not just the last 2 weeks solidly but really for the last about 7 years or 8 years, almost in the same form that is being addressed today. It has been talked about, has been discussed, has been debated, and has been modified.

Later today, we will have a great victory again for the American people in

passing the bill that I expect will pass with overwhelming bipartisan support. The issues that we are talking about are not Democrat issues or Republican issues; they really are American issues. Today, people will be able to look back over the course of the last 2 weeks, and really this whole 109th Congress, and say that we are doing what the American people want, what they deserve; that is, to govern with meaningful solutions to the very real challenges, the very real problems in people's lives, whether it is in Tennessee or Florida or Nevada or California, all over this country. So I am very pleased with the activity on the floor of the Senate.

Over the course of the day, the Budget Committee will also be marking up the budget proposal. Once that markup is completed, we will bring that to the floor. I would very much like to be able to start that bill, if at all possible, tomorrow. Under the rules of the Senate, after that bill comes to the floor, we will spend 50 hours on that bill, and we will have a number of votes.

Once again, historically, or in the recent past, we have had amendment after amendment after amendment. The Democratic leader and I have, over the last week, been engaged in discussions on how we can help the managers of that bill limit the amendments to those amendments that really are important and substantive and to have a good discussion between us and between the managers, among all the Senators, so we can coordinate how to bring those amendments to the floor and have them voted upon so that we do not, at the end of the day, or at the end of that 50 hours, have 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90 amendments, which we have seen in the past. It is not necessary.

If we can work together over the course of the next 8 or 9 days, I believe we can take what can be very chaotic on the floor and give it some definition and make it clear to people we want their ideas heard, we want them debated within the 50 hours, we want to have them voted upon, but we can do it in a way that brings order out of this sometimes chaotic process.

With that, Mr. President, I will yield the floor, looking forward to a very full day. We will be in session tomorrow. I would think—and I will have more to say a little bit later, but in talking to the Democratic leader, if we can complete the budget today in committee, and I believe we can, and if we complete this bankruptcy bill, which we will, then I would think we probably would not have to have rollcall votes tomorrow. We will be in session tomorrow. I put both of those “ifs” in there